

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6185

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

CINCPAC

CINCEUR

AMEMBASSY IALAMBAD

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BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD; CINCPAC & CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MILI, IN, IR

SUBJECT: VISIT OF IIN COMMANDER TO INDIA

REF: NEW DELHI 5219

SUMMARY: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT VISIT OF REAR ADMIRAL ATTAI,
IIN COMMANDER, TO INDIA MARCH 27 TO APRIL 6, HAD MUCH SIGNIFI-
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CANCE IN MILITARY TERMS. RATHER IT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS AN

ELEMENT IN THE GENERALLY IMPROVING IRAN-INDIA TIES. END SUMMARY.

1. ATTAI TOLD US ON HIS RETURN FROM TRIP THAT IT HAD GONE VERY WELL, BUT OFFERED NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT. COL MANSINGH, INDIAN MILITARY ATTACHE WHO ACCOMPANIED ATTAI, WAS MORE FORTHCOMING. HE SAID INDIANS HAD INVITED ATTAI RATHER THAN MORE SENIOR IRANIAN MILITARY LEADERS BECAUSE HE WAS YOUNGER AND THEY THOUGHT HE PROBABLY HAD LONGER TENURE IN PROSPECT. INDIANS KNEW ATTAI EXERCISED NO IMPORTANT AUTHORITY OVER NAVAL POLICY AND, IN FACT, THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCUSSIONS OF SUBSTANCE WITH HIM. MANSINGH DESCRIBED ATTAI AS NEITHER BOOKISH NOR PARTICULARLY BRIGHT, BUT QUITE OPEN AND A STRONG LEADER OF MEN--EXACTLY WHAT IIN REQUIRED. HE SAID ATTAI WAS A GOOD LISTENER WHO VENTURED NO OPINIONS OTHER THAN STATEMENTS OF THE IRANIAN POSITION ON INDIAN OCEAN AND OTHER MATTERS. VISIT HAD SUCCEEDED IN ITS PRIMARY PURPOSES WHICH WAS FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF OVERALL INDIAN RELATIONS WITH IRAN. HE SAID INDIANS DID NOT CONTEMPLATE ANY PUSH FOR CLOSE MILITARY COOPERATION WITH IRAN.

2. W RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBLE IRANIAN PURCHASES OF INDIAN ARMAMENTS WITH INDIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR PRAKASH SHAH WHO DISMISSED IT AS VERY UNLIKELY. IRANIANS WANT ONLY NEWEST, MOST SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS, HE SAID, AND INDIA IS NOT IN THAT LEAGUE. FOR EXAMPLE, INDIA HAD AGREED TO BUILD CEMENT PLANT NEAR ISFAHAN ONLY TO HAVE IRANIANS STIPULATE LATER THAT PLANT MUST BE COMPUTER-RUN WITH NO MORE THAN SIX-MAN STAFF. INDIA DROPPED OUT.

3. SOME IDEA OF KIND OF LINE INDIANS ARE FEEDING IRAN MAY HAVE COME FROM PRAKASH SHAH WHO SPOKE OF GROWING PAKISTANI MILITARY TIES TO GULF STATES. QTE WE ONLY KNOW OF ABU DHABI AND KUWAIT SO FAR, BUT PAKISTAN IS SEEKING OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY COOPERATION. UNQTE THIS COULD MEAN TROUBLE FOR IRAN, HE SPECULATED, FOR WHEN ARAB-ISRAEL CRISIS WAS PHASED DOWN ARAB ENERGIES WOULD TURN TO GULF. PAKISTAN COULD BE INVOLVED ON SIDE OF ARABS.

COMMENT: WE EXPECT IRAN-INDIAN MILITARY COOPERATION TO KEEP PACE WITH OVERALL TIES. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE OTHER EXCHANGES OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS, RECIPROCAL TRAINING, NAVAL PORT CALLS AND POSSIBLY EVENTUALLY JOINT EXERCISES. BUT THESE ACTIVITIES WILL BE LIMITED AND SUPERFICIAL FOR SOME TIME TO COME. IN IIN HAS TOO MANY DEOEVELOPMENT/MODERNIZATION TASKS AHEAD TO ENGAGE IN SUBSTANTIVE

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PROGRAMS WITH INDIA, A COUNTRY THAT FEW IRANIANS FEEL CAN MAKE A SIGNIFICANT, TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTION TO IRAN'S PROGRESS.

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